



EASTERN MISSOURI PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM

St. Louis Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center

**POLICY
NUMBER**

LD.03.04

ASSIGNED REVIEWER LEADERSHIP (CEC)	SUBJECT Visitors	
APPROVED BY Felix T. Vincenz PhD, SLPRC Chief Operating Officer	ISSUED April 21, 1981	REVISED/EFFECTIVE July 15, 2013

POLICY

Visitation is available Tuesdays, Thursdays, weekends and holidays, so clients may be visited by friends, relatives and others, unless such visits are considered to be clinically contraindicated by the treatment team or are not in keeping with the client's wishes.

As timely and effective treatment and rehabilitation activities are the primary obligations of clients, visiting is not to conflict with or disrupt a client's activity schedule, unless specific permission has been obtained from the treatment provider regarding the activity affected.

All programs will visit in the central visiting room (Cafeteria) unless it is a Special Visit. Special visits will be approved by the Program Director and will be in the Chapel or other designated area.

Visitors who come to SLPRC to visit staff shall be escorted at all times when inside the secure perimeter to maintain compliance with the Life Safety Code.

Visiting will occur in a manner consistent with the security and community safety requirements of the facility.

PURPOSE

To allow and encourage friends, relatives, business associates, and others to maintain contact with clients admitted to SLPRC for care.

To ensure that services from clergy and lawyers are readily available to SLPRC clients.

To ensure visitors do not interfere with the treatment, rehabilitation and care of clients.

To ensure that safety of the community, visitors, clients and employees is protected.

PROCEDURE

I. Visiting Hours

- A. The Clinical Executive Committee in collaboration with Program Directors approves visiting hours. Current hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm and Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 3:00 pm to 4:45 pm and 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm.
- B. Visiting hours outside of the standard program times may be arranged through the Program Director of each program to accommodate special circumstances.
- C. If a client visit is to occur outside normal visiting hours, the visitor must arrange the visit in advance with the Program Director of the client's program

- D. An ongoing change in the visiting hours for a specific client or visitor must be approved by the Nurse Manager and the Program Director of the client's program.

II. General Rules of Visitation at SLPRC

Security personnel at the Information Center/Front Gate will greet the visitors and direct them to the Main Building to register and receive a Visitor's Identification Badge.

- A. Visits with clients by anyone other than clergy and the client's attorney of record are a privilege, not a right. Clients have a right to reasonable visitation by clergy and their attorney during normal business and/or visiting hours.
- B. Within the first week of hospitalization, the Social Worker or designee will obtain from the client a list of the client's desired or probable visitors, and Consent to Release Information to each of the visitors. This list will be placed in the visitor's book at the Security desk in the Sally Port.
- C. If a client visitor arrives without prior arrangements, a Security Officer (for Minimum Security) or the Residential Area Staff (for Campus Security) informs the Charge Nurse or Nurse Manager/designee who will contact the client to determine his/her interest in receiving the visit from the prospective visitor. If the client expresses interest in the visit, the Charge Nurse or Nurse Manager/designee will contact the Program Director for approval of the one-time change in visitation schedule.
- D. A client may not have more than two visitors at one time.
- E. All visitors shall enter the grounds at the Arsenal Street entrance and park in the assigned visitor parking in front of the Main Building. Security will notify the front desk when visitors are on the grounds. Security will instruct the visitors where to park and announce over the radio when a visitor has left the building so the guard in the Information Center can monitor them leaving.
- F. All visits will take place in the Main Building unless approved by the Program Director for special circumstances.
 - 1. All visitors must sign in at the Security desk and **identify a person** (client or staff member) that they are visiting.
 - 2. All visitors must sign a confidentiality agreement, indicating their understanding of the need to maintain the confidentiality of all clients encountered during the visitation process.
 - 3. Any visitor who is a member of the media must identify themselves as such and must make prior visitation arrangements with the Department of Mental Health's Director of Public Affairs.
 - 4. Any visitor who is seeking to provide either a mental health or medical service must identify themselves as such and must make prior visitation arrangements with the facility's Medical Director for approval and appropriate credentialing and privileging.
 - 5. All visitors must present Government issued Photo Identification.
 - 6. Visitors signing in at the Security desk must receive a "Red" visitor badge to be worn above the waist at all times during the visit.

7. Any person visiting staff in campus security shall present themselves to the Switchboard, sign in and obtain a "Blue" visitor badge, which shall be worn above the waist at all times.
 4. Visitors to campus security areas of the Main Administration Building, here for business purposes, may sign in at the Switchboard to a **department** (e.g., Volunteer Services; Human Resources; Medical Director's office) if they do not have an appointment with a specific person. Visitor will remain in the Main Lobby until staff arrives to escort the visitor.
- G. By entering the grounds of SLPRC, visitors agree that their vehicle, bags and person may be searched as per SLPRC policy and state law. Visitors may refuse to be searched, but must immediately leave the grounds of SLPRC without having a visit.
- H. Visitors must lock purses and bags in the trunk of their cars. Purses or bags inadvertently brought to the building by visitors are subject to inspection and will be placed in a locker and returned when exiting premises. This is in accordance with Security and in compliance with Statewide or National Security precautions as directed by the Director of the Department of Mental Health, the Governor, or Federal Agency with appropriate jurisdiction.
- I. Visitors will be screened with the metal detector prior to being escorted to the Visitor's Room.
- J. Visitors may not bring weapons, legal or illegal, onto the grounds of SLPRC.
- K. Batteries are not allowed to be brought into the facility. Clients may obtain batteries by having staffs purchase them from the facility's canteen.
- L. Visitors may not access or use hospital recreation equipment or play areas.
- M. Visitors may not provide medication, drugs (legal or illegal) to clients of SLPRC.
- N. Visitors must be appropriately attired. Clothing and other accessories must not be sexually provocative, contain inappropriate images/language, or otherwise distract from the treatment and rehabilitation goals of the facility. No halter tops/tube tops are permitted unless covered fully by a blouse/shirt.
- O. A time-limit of one hour per visitor will be set when there is a maximum of sixteen (16) visitors in the visiting room. Time limits will be set at the discretion of the staff monitoring the visiting room.
- P. All visitors will use the restrooms in the lobby prior to entry into the Secured Visitor's Room.
- Q. Any reason for leaving the Secured Visitor's Room will terminate the visit.
- III. Restriction of Specific Visitors:
- A. Specific visitors may be refused admission if they are on the restricted visitors list as developed by the Administration and Treatment Teams, and/or if a client does not want the visitors to visit. Visitors must be on the Approved Visitor's List.

- B. Justification will be documented in the Medical Record if this is not in accordance with the client's wishes. This restriction will be reviewed according to Facility Policy. Justification can include a finding that the visitor has behaved inappropriately in a prior visit (e.g., sexual behavior, verbal abuse/threats, etc.), has violated the policies of the Facility or Department, or is suspected of providing contraband items during prior visits.
- C. Program Directors will notify the Chief of Security/designee of any restricted visitors and this information will be entered into the Pass/Privilege Database, and the Approved Visitor's List which will be reviewed by Security when visitors present for a visit.
- D. A client's wishes to deny visiting will be respected, unless there is a clear and compelling clinical reason for the visit. This reason is to be communicated to the client and documented in the client's record by a member of the Treatment Team.
- E. If the visitor is listed as a restricted visitor on the Pass/Privilege System Database and on the Visitor's Log or the client does not wish the visit, the Security Officer will deny entry. If the visitor desires more information, the Security Officer refers the visitor to the Program Director for the client's program.
- F. Former Clients are allowed to visit at SLPRC under the following circumstances:
 - Client specific – must be on approved visitor list
 - Events with approval of individual hosting the event – e.g., bingo, AA/NA groups, etc.
 - Otherwise, only with special approval from the Program Director

Any former client whose visitation is deemed problematic in terms of his or her behavior while on campus, or whose visitation proves problematic for his or her community adjustment or participation in community based treatment, will have those visits limited as is appropriate clinically or for facility security.

- G. Visits by Children Under Age 14:
 - 1. Children aged 14 or younger are not allowed to visit clients except by special arrangement. Children brought onto the facility grounds for visitation must be attended by a responsible adult throughout the entire visit. If arrangements cannot be made for the supervision of the children, the responsible adult will be asked to reschedule the visit.
 - 2. Approval for special visits by children must be sought five working days in advance of the visit. Approval must be obtained from the client's Treatment Team and the Unit Director. The client's Treatment Team determines arrangement for location and supervision for the visit.
 - 3. Children under age 14 are not allowed on wards or in cottages.
- H. Visits for an individual client may be limited:
 - 1. The client is threatening, abusive or in any manner a danger to self or others.
 - 2. There is probable cause to believe that the client's visitor(s) have been a source of contraband items.
- I. Suspension of Visitation for a Residential Area or Program

1. Visiting hours for an entire Residential Area or Program may be limited if the Unit Director provides written justification appropriate to the client population served. Approval must be obtained from the COO.
2. Suspension of visitation for the Residential Area or Program is authorized for three days, renewable in three-day increments if the original conditions continue.

IV. Visiting Clients

- A. All persons visiting clients shall be on an Approved Visitor's List.
- B. For visits with clients, all visitors must sign in and obtain a "Red" visitor's badge from a Security Officer at the Security Desk at the Main entrance of the Administration Building. Visitors are to provide Government issued Photo Identification.
- C. The badge is worn chest high so it is fully visible to facility staff. Failure to comply will result in termination of the visit.
- D. The security officer will determine if the visitor is listed on the visitor's list. If the visitor is not listed, visitation will be denied.
- E. The security officer will give the Contraband List to the visitor and verbally ask if they have weapons, sharp objects, lighters/matches, cell phones, batteries, etc.
- F. Security personnel will search visitors as needed utilizing a Metal Detector. All visitors must display any detected metal objects or decline the visit.
- G. Visitors will be encouraged to lock all personal belongings in their car. If this is not possible, the Officer will give the visitor a plastic bin to place their belongings/contraband in and have the visitor place the bin in the locker. The Officer will lock the locker and give the key to the visitor.
- H. All items being taken into the Secured Area will be checked by Security and must be placed by the visitor into a facility issued brown paper bag supplied by the Security Officer.
 1. If the visitor has any objections to the Officer observing this action the visitor will not be allowed to take the item/s into Minimum Security. They will have the option of locking the item/s up in a locker until their departure or locking the item/s up in their car.
 2. If a visitor brings clothing, appliances or other items **for the client to keep:**
 - The Security Officer will call the client's living area to receive the items.
 - Staff from the client's living area will inspect the item/s for appropriateness. Inappropriate items will be immediately returned to the visitor.
 - For all items deemed appropriate for the client a receipt is completed and the articles are recorded on the client's property list.
 - Clothing and other items removed by visitors are deleted from the client's list and noted on a receipt signed by the visitor.

- I. When the visitor has been processed, the Security Officer telephones the Visitor's Room and the Escort Staff will come to the Security desk to escort the visitor to the Visitor's Room.
- J. Upon entry, visitors are to sign the Visitor's Log Book, recording their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- K. In compliance with the Life Safety Code, all visitors must be escorted and/or supervised at all times while in Secured Area.
- L. Any items brought into the Visitor's Room **for the client's use during visits** including food, drinks, etc., shall be inspected by the Visitor Room staff for appropriateness. Food and drinks are to be consumed during the visit, and if not consumed, disposed of when the visitor leaves.
- M. No visits will be allowed in the Treatment areas unless approved in advance by the Program Director and supervised by staff.
- N. At the conclusion of the visit,
 - 1. Any items that were placed in the locker will be returned.
 - 2. Visitors shall return the badges to the Security Officer and sign out.
 - 3. Security will notify the Information Center that the visitor is leaving and they will confirm when the visitor leaves the grounds.
- V. Visiting Staff Persons in Minimum Security
 - A. When visitors need to meet with staff persons in Minimum Security (e.g. former clients coming for therapy, professional consultations, family members meeting and treatment team members, etc.), the visitors must follow similar procedures as persons visiting clients in Minimum Security
 - B. Visitors present themselves to the Security desk in the Main Building to check in and be searched per the procedures outlined in Section II, above. All rules related to the visitor badge, searches, contraband, visitor attire and behavior apply to visitors meeting with staff persons.
 - C. **Security/Switchboard should provide immediate notification to Administration (COO's Office – 877-5987) upon the arrival of any Government Officials, Joint Commission or CMS Surveyors, Health Department Inspectors, EMS or any other official dignitaries requesting to enter Minimum Security.**
 - D. Security will call the staff person that the visitor is here to see; the staff person or a designee will respond to the Security desk and escort the visitor for the meeting.
 - E. The visitor must be escorted by staff throughout the visit and may not go anywhere without staff escort.
 - F. At the conclusion of the visit, staff must escort the visitor to the Security desk, ensure that the visitor is signed out and returns the visitor badge.

VI. Visiting Staff Persons in Campus Security

- A. Any person visiting staff in Campus Security shall present themselves to the switchboard, sign in and obtain a visitor badge, which shall be worn above the waist at all times.
- B. A visitor who is to see only staff at SLPRC (e.g., potential employee here to visit personnel, drug company representative) must remain in the Lobby area until staff escort arrives. This visitor will also be escorted back to the Lobby at the conclusion of the visit.
- C. Any campus security visitor who needs to enter Minimum Security must sign in again with the Security Officer at the Security desk and follow the procedures in Section II.

Approved Visitor List Procedures

All persons visiting clients shall be on an approved Visitor's List.

Within the first week of hospitalization, the Social Worker or designee will obtain from the client a list of the client's desired or probable visitors, and Consent to Release Information to each of the visitors. This list will be placed in the visitor's book at the Security desk in the Sally Port.

Unless documentable clinical contraindications to proposed visitors are identified and documented in the chart, the visitors' list will be forwarded to Security and kept at Information Center.

Upon the patient's request the visitor's list will be reviewed with the patient at each Treatment Plan review and updated or modified as appropriate.

Persons on the visitors' list will be sent an orientation packet by the social worker or designee. The packet will contain instructions for visitors on procedures for visits.

Visiting Room Procedures

Visitors will be screened with the metal detector prior to being escorted to the Visitor's Room.

The Visitors' Room will be supervised by a minimum of 3 staff. One of the staff members will be assigned Visitor Escort.

- A. When the visitor has been processed, the Security Officer telephones the Visitor's Room and the Escort Staff will come to the Security desk to escort the visitor to the Visitor's Room.
- B. In compliance with the Life Safety Code, all visitors must be escorted and/or supervised at all times while in Secured Area.
- C. Upon entry, visitors are to sign the Visitor's Log Book, recording their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- D. Visitor's Room escort staff will assist visitors when the visit is completed or visiting hours have ended and escort them to the Security desk at the Main entrance.

Terminating the visit

- A. If a visitor behaves in a manner inconsistent with this policy, including failure to provide full information on the visitor sign-in log or otherwise violates the rules of the facility, the visitor will be asked to leave. Security will be called to escort the visitor from the grounds. Police may be contacted for assistance as needed. If the behavior is determined to be non-therapeutic, the individual may be restricted from visiting by a Physician's Order. An Incident and Injury Report is completed any time a visitor is asked to leave.
- B. If a visitor provides illegal contraband or otherwise breaks the laws of the State of Missouri, the police will be contacted and the violation reported. If the police do not respond to the facility, Security will be called to escort the visitor from the grounds. Police may again be contacted for assistance as needed. An Incident and Injury Report is completed any time a visitor is reported for law violations.
- C. Any reason for leaving the Secured Visitor's Area will terminate the visit.